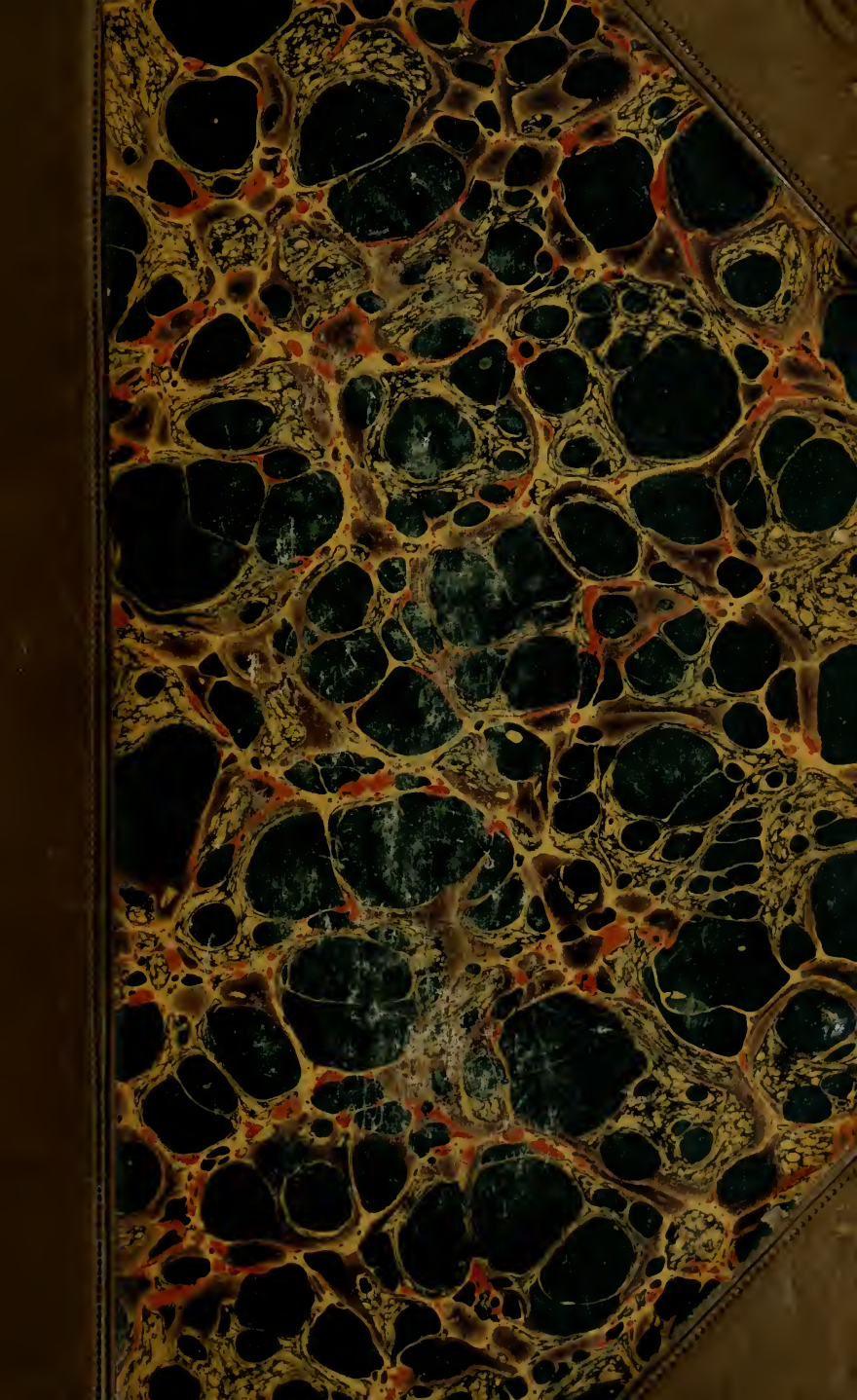

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MISSION LIFE

IN

EAST LONDON.

BEING A SEQUEL TO "THE CHARITABLE ADMINISTRATION OF AN EAST END MISSION DISTRICT," BY A. W. H. C.

BY

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MINISTER OF S. AUGUSTINE'S MISSION, STEPNEY.

LONDON:
J. T. HAYES, LYALL PLACE, EATON SQUARE; AND
17, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN.
1876.

[*Any profits will be devoted to the objects of the Mission.*]

LONDON:
SWIFT AND CO. NEWTON STREET, HIGH HOLBORN, W.C.

MISSION LIFE.

FIVE years have elapsed since the paper was written to which the following narrative forms a sequel; and the East End Mission therein described has passed from the charge of its author into the hands of a successor who still continues the work upon the principles he found in practical operation.

These principles may be summarized in a few sentences.

The character of the district has been sketched by Mr. Cartwright. It was thus described in a letter written about the same time by the late Mr. Edward Denison.*

"It is a fraction of a fraction of a parish, containing some six thousand souls, about three-fourths of whom belong to the lowest grades of the class which live by wages; the other fourth consisting mainly of small shopkeepers, only a step above their neighbours. There are no rich people in the district, and hardly any one who can be called well-to-do with the exception of a few publicans. It is this unbroken level of poverty which is the blight over East London, which makes any temporary distress so severely felt, and any sustained effort to better its condition so difficult to bring to a successful issue. The lever has to be applied from a distance, and sympathy is not strong enough to bear the strain."

And again: "Now about this East of London.

* Letters and other Writings of the late Edward Denison, M.P. for Newark. By Sir Baldwyn Leighton, Bart. Bentley and Co.

What is so bad in it is, not what 'jumps at the eyes' as the French say. No, this summer, there is not so very much actual suffering from want of food, nor from sickness. What is so bad is the habitual condition of the mass of humanity, its uniform mean level, the absence of anything more civilising than a grinding organ to raise the ideas beyond the daily bread and beer, the utter want of Education, the complete indifference to Religion, with the fruit of all this, viz., improvidence, dirt, and their secondaries, crime and disease. Probably there are hardly any of the most needy who, if they had only been moderately frugal and provident, could not have placed themselves in a position to tide over the occasional months of want or of sickness, which there always must be. The bread-winner falls sick, or is out of work for a few months, the home is broken up, the hospital or the workhouse swallows up the family, the thread of life is broken; perhaps they have been removed to a distance from former employers; at any rate life has to be begun again right from the bottom. Is it wonderful that drink and crime levy a large conscription on these wretches, while the remnant subside into dirt and despondency?"

The Bishop of London, on the occasion of his granting me my License, remarked that I was about to undertake an arduous task; and Bishop Piers Claughton, who has frequently visited the district, speaks of it in a recent letter as one presenting peculiar difficulties to a clergyman, and I have certainly found this to be the case.

It need hardly be said that, in a locality such as this, distress and poverty were deeply rooted and widely spread. Every one acquainted with the habits of our labouring classes knows that they are as a rule unthrifty and improvident. Living from hand to mouth they are often incapable of resisting the pressure of hard times, and of maintaining their independence during even the most temporary sickness or misfortune. A rise in the price of provisions, fluctuation in trade, a severe winter, and many other causes bring hundreds at once almost to the verge of starvation.

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Such was the condition of the Mission District when my predecessor took it in hand.

To relieve the distress, which seems to have reached its height in the winter of 1867-8, agents of various benevolent societies and charitable persons distributed, apparently without discrimination, tickets for all the necessaries of life; but the cure threatened to become a greater evil than the disease, for the poverty of the district was degenerating into pauperism. "The wretchedness was as great, the mouths were as clamorous, the pauperism was as extensive as if not a penny had been expended in the relief of the population."

At this juncture it was resolved to try a new system. Endeavours were to be made to teach the poor to help themselves, instead of being dependent upon precarious and indiscriminating charity; and for this purpose two institutions were established, which have ever since been maintained to the great, and as will appear, demonstrable advantage of the population.

Since this system was inaugurated no such distress has been experienced as seems to have habitually prevailed in the district; but it would not be reasonable to claim for so beneficial a change that it is entirely due to the inculcation of lessons of economy, or the establishment of provident clubs, however successful and prosperous the latter may have since become.

Bread at a moderate and even cheap price, tolerable steadiness in the general trade of the country, the absence of epidemics, and indeed of any serious sickness, and a condition of general prosperity throughout the community at large, have all doubtless contributed in promoting improvement here as well as elsewhere; and "charity" being no longer so abounding, the poor have, on occasions of temporary distress, found it necessary to depend more upon their own exertions.

This will suffice as an introduction to the following narrative. It may be added that Mr. Cartwright's paper may be purchased for a penny, at the office of the Charity Organization Society.

I HAVE been frequently asked to give some account of the progress of the work whereof the outlines are traced in my predecessor's paper, and also of any experiences of my own in the East of London, which I think might be of general interest.

In acceding to this request I hope to be able to show, by facts and figures, that the efforts he and those who laboured with him made, to promote the moral and material improvement of the population, have been attended with very encouraging and satisfactory results. And as regards my own experiences, I may perhaps afford some curious information, not always easily attainable, respecting this little known region of the metropolis, as well as convey a few hints and suggestions, which may possibly be useful to others who are engaged, like myself, in the endeavour to plant Christian civilization among the too long neglected masses of our large cities.

Before, however, proceeding to do this, I desire to say a few words about the condition of the district as I found it, on succeeding to the charge in the spring of 1872.

That condition seemed anything but hopeful; and my first feeling was one of considerable anxiety as to my power of carrying out the very diversified task I appeared, rather rashly, to have undertaken, and which I had not adequately realized when I accepted the position.

The work was, indeed, in many respects, unlike any other in which I had up to this time been engaged, and it was soon evident that it would strain all my energies.

The parishes in which my lot had been heretofore cast, were rich and prosperous, whereas this was composed entirely of the poor. In former spheres of duty, I can

hardly add, of labour, the office of the clergyman was confined to the usual routine of Sunday and daily services, preparing sermons, baptizing children, visiting the sick, and superintending the schools. In my new position I found he was looked to for the discharge of a number of other functions, for the very good reason that there was no one else to perform them. Everything, in short, seemed to depend upon him, often even to the ringing of the church bell. I found myself in the midst of a large population, who were either toiling hard to earn their daily bread, or else, apparently, ne'er-do-weels, given over to rags and drink. There was no person in the district who had leisure or capability to aid the clergyman in any conceivable way. Some notion of religion feebly glimmered in the surrounding murkiness, but it seemed eclipsed or smothered by the terrible aspect human life presented.

For some time I felt as if I was walking in a dream, where the outlines of everything were blurred and indefinite. What had I come to this place for? To discharge the duties of clergyman of the district. What duties? For there seemed neither beginning, middle, nor end to them. Occasionally traversing the district to visit sick persons—whose names I found in my predecessor's list, and who were often scarcely possessed of a decent covering until the Mission nurse had supplied them with sheets and bed-gowns—the thought occurred to my mind that it was altogether vain to attempt any improvement in such a locality. A friend to whom I communicated my perplexity advised me not to trouble my mind too much about the matter, as, with such elements to deal with, there was little or nothing to be done.

Shortly after, the Anniversary of the Mission was held, and I availed myself of the occasion to invite many of my friends, but very few came. After the morning Service there was a public lunch, which was a mortifying failure—although no less a person than Earl Beauchamp presided, with the Hon. Mrs. Denison on his right—followed by a parochial tea in the evening. My umbrella

was pilfered, and I heard besides of several pockets being picked on the occasion. My own were similarly operated upon in the subsequent week, although not in the district itself, and I had the tail pockets of my coat sewed up.

Another vexatious circumstance occurred about the same time. A rogue, on pretence of having been sent to my house by one of the Mission women, was unfortunately admitted when I was out, and succeeded in laying hold of several valuable articles, with which he decamped. I am almost ashamed of making the confession, but let the truth be told. One Saturday evening as I was going homewards along one of the great thoroughfares, two or three fellows, apparently by accident, ran against me. I suspected nothing, but the next moment I discovered that my watch was gone. Pursuit was vain, as the thieves had vanished in the crowds which thronged the pavement. When I mentioned this some time after to Mr. Cartwright, he told me that he also had lost a watch, when engaged in an attempt to separate two women who were fighting.

A good deal of fighting was carried on in the high roads, particularly on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. At one spot especially which I had to pass on my way to the Church, I have occasionally seen a ring formed, and the combatants in the middle stripped to the waist and streaming with blood. All this was excessively loathsome and disgusting.

One very sultry day when the odours in some of the courts were more than usually sickly, I started off to have a breath of fresh air on the Thames. My mind had been for some time fermenting, and the fumes were turning my head. After walking for half an hour, like one in a trance, I found myself on Limehouse Pier, and the ships passed up and down the river as in a phantasmagoria. I saw them, but they had no reality; and heard the manifold sounds of river life, but without their making any impression upon me. I got on board the first steamer that came up, without taking a ticket, and made my way among a great crowd of people to the bows.

The steamer stopped at Woolwich, and I remained on board, returning as I came. During this trip I fought a battle in my own mind.

I said to myself: This way of looking at things will never do; you must either buckle to the work that is here evidently waiting to be done, or else give it up. Vexation at what you experience, and despair at what you see, will not alter any of the conditions of your position. I replied to myself: But is there any reasonable prospect of a satisfactory result? To which the other spirit rejoined: What have you to do with results? Go and discharge your duty! Did you not desire a vineyard of your own? And have you not got one? It was clear that there were other difficulties to be surmounted than those which the district presented. I had to overcome my own repugnance to face them.

Two ladies who lived, one in the extreme East, and the other in the West of London, and who superintended respectively the work of the Mission woman, and of the Mission nurse, were on the staff left by my predecessor. The former, Miss I. Lilley, had been for five or six years connected with the Mission, and was intimately acquainted with a great many of the people, over whom she exercised an elevating influence by visiting them in their houses, reading to them at their work meetings, and showing them kindness in her own home. The other lady, the Hon. E. Pomeroy, came once a week to direct and superintend the work of the Mission nurse, and visit her patients. I need not add that the help these ladies afforded was invaluable. Unfortunately Miss Pomeroy left London shortly after I came; but her place was worthily supplied by Miss Mary Fuller (Mrs. Peto), who has continued to visit in the Mission ever since, and to provide comforts for the sick.

Besides the help afforded by these devoted ladies, I was fortunate in being able to count upon the good offices of Mr. E. W. Hollond, who was then carrying on the work left unfinished by Mr. Edward Denison. He greatly relieved me by continuing to provide for the deficit in

the school accounts, amounting annually to a considerable sum.

In the management of the Provident Fund, I had the able assistance of Miss King, who acted as Miss Lilley's lieutenant; and in the Sunday School my predecessor left me some excellent teachers of both sexes, who came from other parts of London.

There was thus a machinery in existence, but still a great deal remained to be done. The plan was to provide as soon as practicable a permanent church and settled parochial institutions, and as yet there were but the beginnings of these.

The only edifice the district possessed, was an iron church divided into two floors, the upper one serving on Sundays as a place of worship, and on week days as a Boys' School, the lower as an Infant School. The Girls had their School in a narrow loft up a ladder in a neighbouring street, which was the only place that could be obtained for the purpose.

How shall I describe the condition of these buildings? The plates of which the church was constructed were so corroded that the congregation had to protect themselves with umbrellas during heavy rain. The lower room was low, dark, and sepulchral, and its atmosphere was sometimes insupportable. But the chief business of the Mission was transacted there, as it formed the only available place of meeting. As for the girls' loft, the roof was so much out of repair as to require props, and I feared it might give way in a gale.

I mention these matters as deserving of record in a narrative like this. Poor, however, as the appointments of the Mission were, they were rich in comparison of what I was told they had been some years before, when the nucleus of a congregation met in the outhouse of a back yard, and there was no school at all. There existed, of course, in the parish the mother church and the parochial schools; but these were some distance off, and had their own congregation and scholars.

In my own district, there was neither place of worship,

nor of education, and the only symbol of religion existed in the shape of a Roman Catholic chapel for the Germans, originally built as a circus, which it might have been mistaken for, the flimsy dome of which fell down with a crash about two years ago, happily without injury to any one, as the congregation had just dispersed. This chapel has just been rebuilt in the form of a Basilica, at the expense of Cardinal Manning.

Such was the general state of the district when I came. There were the beginnings, as I have said, of a permanent state of things, and some of these were of striking interest. The services, for example, were hearty and attended by a devout congregation; and there was a surpliced choir of some twelve or fourteen men and boys. I was always glad when Sunday came round, as the Mission assumed an entirely different aspect, becoming for the time pleasing and attractive.

The schools, also, poor as were their appointments, were wonderfully well taught. The master of the Boys' School was a German, who knew also Latin and Music, and his scholars came fully up to the average of other schools which I had known. These, by the way, mustered three or four hundred, and were composed indiscriminately of English, German, and Jewish children. So struck was I with their attainments, that I suggested the schools being put under Government inspection, believing they would earn a grant; but the state of the buildings did not approach the standard required by the Education Department. I may add that the Catechism was taught to all the scholars indifferently.

The various funds or clubs also were in working order and popular; and on the whole there was a field only waiting to be further cultivated to ensure a rich and perhaps abundant harvest. Rough indeed and intractable many aspects of it seemed, but let courage and patience be our watchword. Besides, were not the lines for the plough already traced? had not the most rugged parts of the work been already done?

My predecessor had been intimately acquainted with the people. I found that although I had been introduced to them by the vicar of the mother parish, who was also much esteemed, and by himself in very eulogistic language, I should have to earn their confidence by rather slow degrees.

This is doubtless the experience of every clergyman entering upon a new charge, but I fancy the poor are less easily won than the upper classes. However this may be, I have found upon trial that they become fast friends.

Well, in time I secured their confidence, chiefly by carrying on the work as I had found it laid out; and gradually the obstacles I was at first sensible of became of less account. And now there remain only two difficulties which have been sometimes, however, very pressing; namely, how to obtain properly qualified district visitors and Sunday school teachers; and secondly, to provide the requisite funds for the efficient carrying on of the work, without encroaching upon the benevolence of personal friends, upon whom the district has no especial claim.

It has been often suggested to me whether there are not in the locality employers of labour willing to contribute funds for so good a purpose? Well, with the exception of one firm, which has made a donation of five pounds, I have been unable to find any other disposed to afford assistance. They will, as Secretaries of State generally reply to deputations, "consider" the application, and perhaps they are "considering" it still, for I have not given them up.

It may be said, however, on the other hand, that the

employers of much of the labour in the locality have no knowledge whatever of the hands they employ, and when they have paid them their wages their obligations are considered to be discharged. The employers, besides, live elsewhere; either in the squares of the West or in country mansions, where they allege they have their own poor to look after.

It is to be considered also that the prevalence of "strikes" has in recent years caused a breach between capital and labour, and many employers, instead of favouring a movement which is intended to ameliorate the condition of the lower classes, will on principle withhold their sympathy, on the ground that the earnings of labour are high enough for the working man to improve his condition, and that charitable efforts to help him to do this only tend to increase the rate of wages and to deprive strikes of half their penalties.

But are there no ground landlords? I believe there are several, with rather dubious titles however. Half the district is owned by the London Hospital, but that institution requires all the rents it receives, and many times more, for its own purposes.

From these statements, it will be apparent that the funds for the Mission work must come from without the district.

Let me add a few more words about this important question of funds. It was my predecessor's "crook in the lot," and is mine. I think I am betraying no secret when I state that it was this difficulty combined with the anxiety occasioned to an earnest spirit by the various responsibilities and disappointments, in a word, by the constant strain of the position, which for a time disabled him in more ways than one, and induced him at length to remove into another department of Church work.

This is by no means a satisfactory condition of things. It is clearly unfair that a heavier charge should be laid upon any one than he can be reasonably expected to bear, and the willing horse should not be urged till he breaks down. Mission work is attended with peculiar difficulties, and requires liberal support. Some people, I believe,

regard a Missionary as a kind of hack, who may be remunerated at a cheap rate. They are in error. A clergyman in such a position ought to possess varied experience and sound judgment and discretion; and as regards cheapness, as it is called, the outgoings of a Mission are the same in kind as those of any ordinary church, and if they are not, some item must be left out which ought to be kept in. Cheap things are often dear at any price.

Now, who is to support such work as this, since a poor district cannot? As a rule, I believe, Missions are maintained in London and elsewhere through the exertions of the clergyman himself. In fact, he is expected to find the means, and must either do so, or fail. But this is a vicious arrangement, for it compels the clergyman either to support what is strictly a work of public utility out of his own private means, if he has any, or to become a beggar, if he has none, and thus to consume time and energy which might be better used for Missionary purposes under a proper distributive system. I have known clergymen, indeed, who have for years borne the burden of providing means for their church and parish expenses, and some continue under this necessity to the end of the chapter.

Ah! I think I hear some one say, this is what comes of breaking up poor parishes into small districts. But surely that does not follow. I maintain that every large parish requires to be broken up into manageable portions, whether it be rich or poor, and the greater the poverty, the stronger the reason why the breaking up should take place.

And I will briefly give my reasons. The first is, that no church, however well served, can make its influence felt by the surrounding population beyond a much more confined area than it is commonly supposed to reach. Outside that area the influence becomes so attenuated as to be practically inappreciable. If, therefore, you are to provide for the people in that outer region, you must create one or more fresh centres.

Secondly, I say that the greater the poverty of such outlying districts, the greater the necessity for such new centres. For such new centres imply fresh religious and

other institutions where they are most required; and, what is better than all, the residence in the new district of a clergyman who is presumably also a man of education and a gentleman, and therefore a civilizing force.

It has been objected, indeed, that the system of breaking up poor parishes creates so many poor new centres, instead of one perhaps only moderately well supported one, and absorbs money in buildings and machinery which would be better spent in increasing the means of usefulness of the parent establishment.

Well, the first part of this objection may be true in fact, though I do not see its force; for it is surely better, according to the first reason given above, to have a poor new centre, than no new centre at all. Besides it is not obvious why the new centre should be necessarily poor. I assume its being endowed. As to the proposed alternative mode of applying funds, there ought to be means sufficient both for the parent and offspring establishments, and if the vast Church of England endowments, for which there is now no longer any occasion in the City, were equitably apportioned among the population which has been squeezed out to make room for counting-houses and warehouses, as they will, no doubt, under the action of a higher moral tone in public opinion, ere long be, they would be forthcoming.*

In offering these remarks, let me say that I do not advocate, in the providing of new centres for church work in our poorer parishes, large and expensive edifices, which may probably never be filled. It is within my knowledge, that in a number of City and East-end churches the galleries have been removed, either because they have ceased to be used, or because they were, perhaps, never used, or were never likely to be used. A century or two ago, when new churches were built, the idea seems to have been to erect, at great cost, very capacious pewed edifices; and, I suppose, those churches were

* See Correspondence relating to the Parochial Charities of the Ancient City of London, by Sir Charles Trevelyan, Bart., K.C.B. Spottiswoode and Co. 1875.

once well filled. In later times, the same idea seems to have guided church builders, though the scale of their edifices was every way less ambitious.

This idea has, however, become modified; and the present notion of a church suitable, at all events, for a poor neighbourhood, is that its dimensions should be small as compared with our grandfathers' type, but that it should be free and convenient of access to the surrounding population.

But I am digressing, and will proceed now to state what the pecuniary aspect of the Mission under my charge is. The stipend is £200 a year, but this is reduced to £150, as the rent of a parsonage house falls to be deducted. The outgoings of the Mission average from £150 to £200 a year, and comprise Mission-house rent, taxes, insurance, repairs and fittings, salaries, books, help to the sick and indigent, entertainments, and school rewards.

To meet this expenditure the Mission has received grants of from £40 to £50 from the Bishop of London's Fund and the Metropolitan Visiting and Relief Association; the collections in the church, consisting by the way of pence and farthings, amount to something over £20 more, and the deficit is provided partly by old friends* of the Mission, and partly by new ones. I have also occasionally turned lecturer to obtain means for certain purposes, and in order to avoid troubling my friends.

I have alluded to the parsonage, and this reminds me that I have been asked whether I reside in the district.

This house, which goes by the name of Coynant, or Cognant, for I have failed to discover the derivation of so singular a title, is situated in a thoroughfare called the Globe Road, and was built about a century ago. It may be seen in maps of London of that date, together with a few others in the immediate neighbourhood, the space intervening between them and the city being then country. I suppose it was originally intended for a

* I have also thankfully to acknowledge offerings from St. Gabriel's, Pimlico; Christ Church, Ealing; and Hawarden.

merchant's villa, for it overlooked a park, now built upon; the only remnant of which consists of a small garden bordered by old trees, in the centre of which the house stands. It is a kind of stronghold in its way, the walls being thick, and the shutters and outer doors lined with iron, and protected by ponderous bars, suggestive of housebreakers. In later years it has been used as a parsonage by a succession of city rectors; and my predecessor, seeking for a house and finding this vacant, took it at a comparatively low rent, and on leaving transferred it to me, as the idea of obtaining a suitable house within the district was quite out of the question.

To return, however, to my story.

After I had been several months in the Mission changes took place, which considerably modified its character, and tended towards its advancement.

In the first place the London School Board scheduled the district as one among several others in the neighbourhood which were to enjoy the benefit of a Board School in their midst.

It would have been useless for me to have interposed, even if I had been so minded, for my opinion was not asked, and I was therefore left no choice. I very much regretted giving up the schools, but an adversary was in the way with me, with whom it was politic to agree quickly; and indeed, the necessity for giving them up had become urgent.

I have already mentioned Mr. E. W. Hollond. It was at this juncture that he was taken ill and ordered to seek necessary rest and relaxation. Before leaving town he kindly undertook to provide his accustomed help to the schools until such time as they should be transferred to the London School Board. Meanwhile I arranged with Mr. E. H. Currie to hand over my schools to him, and one morning I marched the scholars to the temporary premises provided for them, wishing them God speed in their new place of education, and telling them I hoped to see them as usual at the Sunday School of the Mission.

It was hardly a day too soon. A severe storm tore off

part of the plates of the school church, deluging the organ, and rendering the building uninhabitable.

I set myself to get the church repaired to such an extent at least as would prevent the necessity for the use of umbrellas during the service. The Bishop of London's Fund made a liberal grant, and I obtained from private sources a sufficient sum for seats and fittings, the old ones being irreparably damaged. The upper and lower rooms were thrown into one, and in this way a fair temporary church was obtained, capable of accommodating, with the gallery space, 250 persons.

About the same time a house falling vacant nearly opposite the church, and presenting capabilities that promised well for a Mission House, I took it at a rent of £40 on my own responsibility, and by throwing two rooms and the intervening passage in the street floor into one, obtained an apartment sufficient for fifty adults or eighty children, the upper rooms being arranged as residences for the Mission women, the nurse, and the caretaker of the church. In this way the Mission was provided with a house adequate for present requirements.

Shortly afterwards I engaged another Mission woman to overtake the work the first* had created ; and the district was divided between them.

Before leaving this part of the subject, I desire to offer a suggestion as to the material of which temporary churches should be constructed.

Iron is not suitable for such a purpose in our English climate, for unless frequently painted the plates soon corrode, and they cannot easily be repaired. It is objectionable also as being a cold material for winter, and a hot one for summer. Brick is by far the best and cheapest in the end. The frame should be made of timber and built in with brick, as is the custom in many permanent houses abroad.

* Mrs. Elliott, since dead. For her interesting history see "A Servant of the Poor," published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. 1874.

I WILL now advert to the condition of the Provident Funds and other institutions founded by my predecessor; but in judging of their success, the reader will be good enough to keep in mind the condition of the district, as he and Mr. Denison have described it.

The first Club* established by Mr. Cartwright was the Clothing Club. In this the deposits of the poor are collected by the Mission women, and returned in the shape of clothing, bedding, or articles for domestic use.

The operations of the Club have been as follows :—

Year.	Families visited.	Deposits received.	Persons at weekly meetings.
1865	4464	£38 6 8½	822
1866	4708	47 12 6½	621
1867	1852	11 7 8½	191
1868	8538	62 17 3¼	970
1869	11,028	85 4 8½	880
1870	11,483	97 8 9	646
1871	11,476	117 6 10¾	621
1872	17,305	121 19 9¼	700
1873	16,329	131 0 4½	612
1874	11,213	103 15 6¾	776
1875	18,262	139 11 5¾	1,055
In eleven years		£977 11 9¼	

To estimate at its proper value the meaning of these savings it should be considered what the condition of many in the district might at the present time have been had they not been made.

* Or, more properly, re-established in 1867.

To what are the savings applied? To the purchase of necessary articles exclusively, for they cannot be appropriated in any other way. Any one who knows the habits of our poorer classes is aware of the thoughtless, thriftless way in which they spend the money that comes into their possession. I may afford some specimens of their lavish ways before I conclude. Meanwhile, observe that their money in numberless instances is expended first in food and firing, and next in amusement and drink. It would be often more correct to invert this order. At all events, so much is expended on these items that the home is frequently impoverished, and sufficient money is not left to provide the necessary clothing and bedding and ordinary furniture to make the room even tolerably comfortable. Speaking generally, the poor cannot keep money, and, if their condition is to be improved, agencies must be devised to keep it for them. It is this inability to lay by, added to frequent visits to the beershop, which prevents them buying articles necessary for every house, however humble, but which cost sums more considerable than they are often able to pay.

Here I will digress for a moment to speak of the value I have learned to set upon the work of the Parochial Mission women in a poor parish.

These women are themselves selected from the poorer class, and receive only such remuneration as they might earn in the homes from which they are taken. Their work is neither to teach, read, nor distribute alms, but to show, by their example, and by intercourse with the poor, how thrift, order, and cleanliness may improve their condition and promote their comfort and well-being. The Mission women also have opportunities of influencing people for good in times of sickness and distress, and they form a link between the clergyman and his poorer people which soon becomes an indispensable part of the machinery of his district.

I turn now to the Provident Fund, which was established at the commencement of 1869, for the purpose of affording facilities to the population to save their money

by weekly deposits. Here is a summary of the operations of this Fund.

Year.	Depositors.	Amount deposited.
1869	251	£ 78 5 6
1870	419	180 1 8
1871	542	266 15 7
1872	718	346 9 10
1873	459	301 2 1
1874	404	264 5 0
1875	503	352 19 10
In seven years,	3296	£1789 19 6

The interest* paid upon these deposits amounted in the whole to about £40, and was partly earned by being placed in the Post Office Savings Bank, and partly granted for the purpose by the Metropolitan Visiting and Relief Association.

Towards the close of last year (1875), I was invited by Mr. Bartley, Secretary of the Provident Knowledge Society, to attend a meeting of the National Savings Bank, Limited, then incubating.

A good number of the clergy were present, and both Mr. Bartley, and the Chairman, Colonel Eardley Wilmot, were closely interrogated as to the principles and proposed practice of the enterprise. On the part of the clergy there seemed to exist a very general feeling that the Provident Funds or Penny Banks they managed had become a source of considerable trouble and responsibility, and as the new undertaking seemed to stand the test of the strictest examination, Mr. Bartley was asked, before the meeting closed, to take over several such Funds or Banks at the new year.

On the 3rd of January, the Collector of the Bank took my customary place in the Mission House, and I assisted him to receive deposits from 98 persons, amounting to £46 odd. Of this sum, however, one depositor put in

* Interest, at the rate of 3 per cent. was paid upon sums which were suffered to remain in the Bank till the end of the year.

all her savings of £36, which she had for the most part allowed to accumulate since the commencement of the Fund.

An illustration of the suspicion with which any novel enterprise where money is concerned is regarded by the poor here occurred. I had given my depositors three weeks' notice of this change, and explained to them, as I thought, the superior advantages the new system would afford them. But in the new list many familiar names were wanting. I heard one reason for this hesitation. The soundness of the new security was suspected. At the next meeting, therefore, I took the opportunity of arguing the matter with them.

You have hitherto, I said, been trusting me, and me alone, and if you have all on every occasion of your applying for them, received your deposits back in full, all I can say is, you may consider yourselves very fortunate, for the security has been a very risky one. Supposing, I said, an accident had befallen me when I had sums of yours in my hands, who then would have satisfied all your numerous claims? You would have got back the money, no doubt, but not at once, for the accounts would have given any one else but myself much trouble to unravel. Besides, I added, you do not consider how much labour the receiving, booking, keeping, and paying back of your deposits involves, and how difficult it is to obtain a competent person to take my place at this table when from any cause I require to be absent.

But they did not see this. All they knew was that hitherto their money had been safe with me; they never thought how much responsibility was thereby entailed.

What I felt was that the lesson of economy had been already so far inculcated by the clergyman, and the National Penny Bank being prepared to take the Provident Fund off my hands, a favourable opportunity was presented for weaning the people from the clergyman's nursing. And very much relieved am I now that the risk attendant upon the safe custody of several hundreds

of pounds of the savings of the poor has been transferred to shoulders which I believe will be well able to bear it.

I am writing at greater length than I intended, but this question of Provident Funds is important, and I have still a little more to say upon the subject.

That our people require to be taught to save their earnings, and that this can often only be done by the clergyman will, I suppose, be admitted. But when a business of this kind becomes large, its transactions almost require a regular accountant, which a clergyman can hardly be, without stepping out of his sphere. There are persons indeed who urge, There are the Post Office Savings Banks, what more can you require ?

Well, the poor do not take kindly to the Post Office Banks. First, the Post Office will receive no deposit less than a shilling, and requires certain formalities on the withdrawal of money which involve more trouble than the poor will undergo for the sake of the small sums with which they have mostly to deal. In the next place, the savings of the poor are generally effected by the wives and mothers, who either come themselves or send their children with the sums they intend to deposit. If a great thoroughfare intervenes between their homes and the Post Office they are very loath to cross it on ordinary occasions, and they rightly refuse to allow their children to do so.

If, therefore, economy is to be inculcated among the class which needs most to learn the lesson, facilities must be afforded greater than the Post Office Banks offer, and it is here the National Penny Bank fills up a gap, for it undertakes to send a clerk to make collections at any time and place desired, and in dismissing the subject I wish that Bank all success.

The Funds established by my predecessor being in the condition I have described, material improvement has, as a natural consequence, followed, and there is now a considerable amount of prosperity in the district.

I have known, for example, cases where families have saved enough to set up in trade for themselves,

or to emigrate with something in their pockets. I might cite the instance of one such family, who were earning a precarious subsistence by tailoring when I first knew them. In time they hired a sewing machine, then bought it; to this they added another, and I believe a third, and now they have the whole house to themselves, and are doing a not inconsiderable business.

Another family I knew (they were Germans), who saved sufficient wherewith to emigrate to America. I might cite another case—that of a shoemaker. He also was a German, and when I first knew him was leading an exceedingly laborious life, working from five in the morning till eleven at night. I will state presently how such work as his is remunerated, but meanwhile let me finish my story about this man. I made his acquaintance by being called on a sudden to baptize his infant, which was dying. I am sometimes asked by the Germans to do so on emergencies, and as Dr. Cappel entirely concurs, of course I never refuse.

Well, a more wretched home I had hardly ever seen, but the people were hardworking and self-denying. I was much gratified, therefore, one day when the German came to tell me he had saved a little money, and had taken a small shop in an adjoining street. He wished at the same time to thank me for baptizing his child. In this shop he remained two years, doing an apparently increasing business, as the appearance of the window showed. Last year he came to me again, and told me he had taken a contract which would be profitable to him if he could procure a loan of £5. Thinking favourably of the case, I referred the man to the Charity Organization Society. The Local Committee granted the loan, and the contract was successful. The man is now in a larger shop in one of the great highways, and I believe is doing a good business. I should add, to complete my story, that the loan was repaid, and that the last time I saw him and his family they were all well dressed, and were the picture of prosperity.

It will be perceived from the hints I have let fall that the population of my district is a mixed one; one-fifth, perhaps, consisting of Germans, Poles, and Jews. This is about the proportion they bear to the whole in the list at the Mission. With this element of the population I often come into contact; and I look upon them all as equally within the province of the Mission, in its aspect as a social reforming agency, to assist. The Mission women indeed, and the Mission nurse are instructed to make no difference in their dealings with different creeds or nationalities. In this way I have relations with a great variety of people, with some of whom I have become intimate.

I will presently describe some of these, as specimens of the characters I am thrown into contact with; but before doing so, I will extract from the Mission books a list of some of the occupations pursued in the district.

I find, then, butchers, bakers, skin-dressers, sausage-makers, engine-drivers, engineers' hands, brewers' men, policemen, tailors, pattern-makers, gunsmiths, locksmiths, tinsmiths, sempstresses, boot, shoe, and slipper makers, button-hole stitchers, dock labourers, coopers, cellarmen, pipe makers, acrobats, piece brokers, marine store dealers, pedlars, doll dressers, sewer-men, street singers, barrel organ men, publicans' men, sugar bakers, fruiterers, costermongers, bell founders, stevedores, furniture brokers, cigar makers, carpenters, confectionery bakers, undertakers, carmen, accordion and banjo makers, glaziers, frame and looking-glass makers, and I dare say there are many more.

I could tell many stories about some of these people and their trades; for one of the most interesting aspects of my position consists in the opportunities it gives me of becoming acquainted with the means whereby London lives. I seem here to get behind the dial, and to see the working of the great machine of human society; and the more closely one observes this the greater astonishment does it create; for even from this wretched corner of the great city links stretch to the farthest ends of the earth.

In the trades I have just mentioned, most of the work done in the district is of the lowest class. I mean, articles are here turned out in the first instance, and they pass through several intervening hands before they finally reach the consumers, or purchasers, of them. This accounts for the difference of price between their original and their ultimate cost. As a rule, the great shops and warehouses supply the material ready prepared for the workpeople, who generally bring them up to a certain point, at which the goods are transferred to other hands to be finished.

To take a few examples.

A City firm, suppose, has a contract to supply a certain quantity of clothing, or any other article; the contractor prepares the stuff, and bargains with one or more middlemen, who find the labour; or else the contracting house sends the stuff out direct.

Let me take some articles at which my people work, and what they earn thereby. The rate at which slippers are made by the workmen is, for example, about four shillings per dozen pairs, and boots from eight to fifteen shillings; waistcoats are paid for at the rate of from nine to fifteen or eighteen shillings the dozen; trousers, from fifteen to thirty shillings per dozen pairs; coats, half-a-crown to five shillings a piece, or if of superior quality ten shillings to a pound. At button-holing, a good hand may earn a pound a week; finishers and pressers, the same. This is, indeed, about what may be earned in any of the trades just mentioned; but to earn this sum the work must be continued fifteen hours. When there are several in a family the earnings may be doubled, trebled, or quadrupled; and I have known such families to deposit a pound, and occasionally two pounds, a week in the Provident Fund.

There are other trades in which labour is paid for by the day. Thus dock hands may earn from fifteen shillings to a pound a week. Costermongers, if clever and diligent, may realize a pound, or even two, in profits of their trade. Other occupations are less profitable, especially where a contract is sublet, as is often the case, and then earnings are reduced almost to starvation point. Thus light slippers for export to the tropics bring in only two shillings per dozen pairs, shirts from a shilling to four shillings per dozen; and lucifer match box makers, threepence a gross. A change in fashions sometimes implies abundance of work in certain trades, or no work at all. Cigar making is chiefly in the hands of the Jews.

What is called the piece-brokering business forms a curious illustration of the manner in which everything, however apparently worthless, is turned to account in London. Thus the cuttings of cloth, linen, silk, and other materials are bought, sorted and resold by the piece-brokers, who sometimes make a great deal of money. Here is a specimen of one.

He is a Jew, and although his shop seems a poor enough one, it contains many tons of stuff which he and his wife sort, pack, and dispose of. He gets rags from all quarters by the waggon load, and has a considerable trade with our Colonies and with Africa. A year ago he sent his son to the Cape, and set him up with goods to the value of £1000. The woollen rags go to Yorkshire, to be made into shoddy; the linen, to the paper-makers; and the lighter ones, mostly patterns apparently, are sold at so much a pound to the doll-dressers. One day seeing in his shop window a number of scarlet and other liveries, I had the curiosity to go in and ask him where he had got them, and what they were for. He had bought them at the clothes fair in Houndsditch, by auction, and they were going to be sent to the East Coast of Africa. I pictured to myself king Koffe and the Ashanti princes in cast-off Lord Mayors' coachmans' coats and cocked hats, and the idea was not a little grotesque.

I have seen on his counter bales containing clothing

for the Colonies. How much do these trousers cost you? I asked. Four and sixpence. And how much do they fetch on the other side? Nine or ten shillings. The freight? Twopence or threepence the pair, packing and dues included. What are all these paper things lying there? Look and see; unfold one. It was a girl's frock. A pattern, I said. No, not a pattern—a dress! A dress? Yes, a dress. They were fashionable paper gowns, in gaudy colours, for the East Coast of Africa. Look, sir, would you like a beautiful piece of stuff for the missus? Show it to me. He produces a small piece of magnificent crimson damask satin, fit for a royal robe. How much? Two pounds a yard. You may have it for one. Too grand for me! He offers a cake of unleavened bread for the little one, and we part.

This cake deserves a word of description. It consists of a very thin biscuit, about a foot in diameter, made of pure wheaten flour, water, and a little salt, and is the unleavened bread of the Passover; but the Jews eat it at other times as well. On their great festivals, and particularly at Easter, they make complimentary presents of these cakes to their friends, and this is how we get them. The cakes are very good, and as they are of course brittle, a great proportion is broken in the course of manufacture. The broken pieces are pounded and converted into food for infants, for which their purity qualifies them.

There seems no reason to doubt that it was one of such cakes that our Saviour blessed at the institution of the Holy Supper, and that the Roman Catholic Church has preserved the tradition in the wafer used at the Mass.

Another Jew had his children at the schools, and his wife also was well known at the Mission. To make his trade intelligible, it will have to be borne in mind what an enormous quantity of damaged goods finds its way into the market.

Take this instance. A partner in a Manchester warehouse in the City told me that on one day shortly before Christmas he sold, of one article alone, £6000 worth.

This house takes stock twice a year, and all goods in the least damaged or out of fashion are put on one side. These are purchased by brokers to make room for fresh arrivals.

Well, my friend—whom I will call Mr. Moses —deals in china, leather goods, and crystal. He goes the round of the great shops at stocktaking times and buys up the depreciated goods. If they are china he cements the broken bits together, or if glass gets them blown in the furnace, and he has occasionally some beautiful articles in Dresden, Minton, Majolica, and Bohemian ware. It will have, no doubt, been observed that china ornaments, figures, and nicknacks are very frequent in pawnbrokers' shop-windows. Moses says they are bought of dealers in his line of business. Many customers from the West frequent his shop; and fashionables, he says, are not above driving as hard a bargain with him as any of his own nation.

His son, who was at St. Augustine's school, does a business of his own in goods which he buys at Government store and other sales; and the other day he told me he had bought a large parcel of French clocks. I was much amused on one occasion with a purchase the lad had made. I met him carrying a heavy bag. What have you got there? I asked. Boots, he said. The parcel consisted of a quantity of pattern boots, all for one foot. I asked him who he expected would buy them? Without moving a muscle, he replied that there were plenty of one-legged people who would be glad to have a well-made boot cheap.

Another Jew with whom I have had dealings, trades in cutlery and ironmongery. He has been twenty years in his present place, and says he began business with a crown piece. My conversations with him always take a religious turn. He calls himself a Christian Israelite, and is a preacher and leader in his sect. His knowledge of Scripture is extensive, and he renders good reasons for his peculiar system, which has neither priests, sacraments nor liturgies. He seems to hold all that any Christian would on the subject of the true Messiah having

come, and of Jesus Christ being the Son of God. But he becomes very transcendental; and as our conversation goes on when I am making some trifling purchase, and is interrupted by other persons coming in and going out we never get much beyond the point at which we started, and I expect never will.

This man has addressed letters to English theologians, one of them a Bishop, pressing arguments upon their notice in favour of his peculiar system, and is much hurt when a reply is not returned. His controversy, however, is of tremendous dimensions, and I have told him I hardly wondered at his correspondents not wishing to engage in it. Justly enough, however, he rejoins, that they ought either not to make without proof the statements at public meetings to which he objects, and which are the occasion of his taking his pen, or, if they make them, should answer his counter arguments. At all events, civility is cheap, and a polite letter deserves acknowledgment.

Having given some specimens of my Jewish parishioners, let me add a few more of my English ones.

One of these (he died a year ago) was an old man bearing a name not unknown to fame. He also was in the brokering trade. I made his acquaintance through his occasionally having old books in his shop window. His account of himself was that he was the illegitimate son of the distinguished man whose name he bore, and he used to have a small allowance until comparatively recent years from his family. He was much respected by the lodge to which he belonged, and which presented him with a medal shortly before his death. His business consisted in clearing out houses after sales of goods. His shop was always in extraordinary confusion, and I have had to get him to provide a boy to ferret out the books that were lying about, covered with heaps of rubbish. He never knew what they were. On one occasion I found a folio volume of Bayle's Critical Dictionary stopping up a broken pane of glass. I asked him where the other volumes were. He said he had sold them all with a quantity of insides of other books, of which he

showed me the boards, at three halfpence a pound to Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper collectors for pulp.

Still a number of books, chiefly French and German, remained, of which I bought a few at twopence a pound, but many of them were odd volumes. I asked him where he got such a queer collection, and he told me their history. A gentleman belonging to the Bank of England had recently died at Bow, who had been a collector of pictures and books all his life, and possessed also a cellar of curious wines. His house was stuffed with books, as they were found in closets, under sofas and beds, and even piled up on the steps of the staircase. The sale took place in due course. The pictures fetched several thousands of pounds, and were bought by dealers from the West, who purchased also the best of the library and of the wine.

There were still two van loads of stuff over, which my friend bought by weight or bulk. Among the lots was one of odd bottles of wine, supposed to be home made. It turned out, however, to be Tokay, worth ten shillings a bottle.

The same man had occasionally quantities of red cloth, and what is called Turkey red, which he sold by the pound. It came from such places as the Guildhall, after an Emperor's or a Prince's visit, or from St. Paul's Cathedral. The Turkey red, he said, is bought by the people who make the sawdust rolls which are used to stop draughts at the juncture of window frames.

Another of my English parishioners has a polishing shop, where he furbishes up steel goods of all kinds, chiefly from old Government stores. It is extraordinary what quantities of rusty knives, scissors, buckles, stirrups, bits, and other steel articles find their way through this channel into the market.

Occasionally van loads of boxes arrive at his shop filled with old guns, swords, and bayonets. This takes place, I have observed, when there is any Colonial or African war going on.

My friend is a pious Wesleyan, and on some occasions has communicated to me his misgivings as to the lawful-

ness of his occupation; for I am a man of peace, he says, and abhor bloodshed.

I have consoled him, however, with the reflection, that so long as he does nothing worse than polish up old blunderbusses which their owners will be careful to put very little powder into, in case they burst, he may keep his mind at ease, and as for the sabres, as they will probably only be used as ornaments by the negroes, he can keep them as blunt as his contract will allow.

Comparisons are justly said to be odious, but one cannot sometimes avoid making them, and I have frequently, in my own mind, contrasted the characteristics of my parishioners of different nations. As regards the Jews, the common estimate of them is a very unjust one. They are a hard-working, steady-going, and, in my experience, fair dealing people, and, as a rule, they improve their opportunities. Their style of living would be contemned by our own people, for they are usually content with the most frugal fare. They have a kind of poor law of their own, with guardians appointed, I believe, by the synagogues. They are strict in their religious observances, and bring up their children to read so much Hebrew as is required to understand their service books. It is extraordinary what large families they have, but somehow or ot her they manage to turn them to account at an early age, and to make them earn an independent subsistence.

The Germans are generally also economical and frugal as compared with our own people, and seem to be able to turn their hand to a variety of employments; so that when they are out of one kind of work, they generally take up another, and this of course gives them a considerable advantage. When they do break out, however, into dissipation, their revels are dreadful. "Diem, noctemque continuare potando," as Tacitus said of their ancestors, "sæpius cæde et vulneribus." They frequently intermarry with our own people, and then the children are accounted English. A good many go to the United States, but I never heard of any returning to their native country, for they have a horror of the conscription.

I WILL now relate an adventure which brought me into contact with two curious characters.

One day I was passing along one of the great roads which border on the district, when I was attracted by an old folio I saw lying on a little book stand which its owner pitches on a particular spot twice a week, wheeling it elsewhere on the other days. I had little time to spare, and was only able to open the folio and turn over a page or two. I saw at once it was a rare, if not a valuable, book, being the account of a journey through Italy, Turkey, Egypt, and the Holy Land, with steel plates, written in King James's time, with a dedication to his son, Prince Henry.

At that time, the man who kept the stall and I were hardly acquainted. How much was the book? Four and sixpence. I said I would take it, but I was going away from my home at that moment, and on my return in an hour or two I would claim it.

The hour or two, however, was spun out into six hours, and when I called for the book, handing the man its price, he said he had sold it. I thought, I said, you were to have kept it for me. I did keep it for you for a time, he replied, and twice refused to sell it, but as you were so long in returning I gave you up. All right, I said, quite fair, but who bought it? I can't tell you that, he said, though I know the man by sight, as he often buys old books of me: in fact, he is my best customer, but he is a strange character, and I have no idea who he is, or where he lives.

Well, I said, I wish you could find out. I am cūrious to see the book, as it gives a description of countries

two or three hundred years ago, in some of which I have myself travelled. All I wish to know is the exact title of the book, which I did not catch in the morning.

It was arranged that I should call again in a week, which I did. Have you found out who bought the book? Yes, he has just been here, and his address is No. —— —— Road. That is his shop; he lives opposite, in —— Court, but you must be careful how you speak to him, as he has a peculiar temper.

Well, I went to the shop indicated. It was a wholesale boot and shoe shop, and my new friend was the manager and salesman. He was an old man with very pinched features, and an eye that was never at rest, and never looked me in the face.

I said, You bought a book last week which I believed I had bought, as the man down the road has told you, and I come to ask if you will let me see it. An interval of silence, which my friend broke by making an observation about Messrs. Moody and Sankey, who were then at the Bow Road Hall holding their services.

I followed suit, and we discussed the subject for perhaps five minutes, when I thought it time to try my hand at the book once more.

Now, about this book, I said, you will of course let me see it. What is its title?

But my friend doubled like a fox. Did you ever read Boston's Fourfold State? he asked. I have, I replied, in part, at least; I have the book. A remarkable book that, he said. I have several hundreds of books like that; and then he went through a list of Puritan theologians; adding, Yes, I have all these and a number of other curious old volumes that I don't think you or anybody else has ever read.

I should like very much to see your library, I said. Can't you take me over it with you some day?

Well, he said, the fact is I live in a very humble way, and quite alone with the Lord. So much the better reason, said I, why I should come and spend an hour with you some evening.

He doubled again and got upon some other topic. Time was pressing and I had engagements, so I bade him good day, and said I would call again in a week; upon which he said he would be always happy to see me.

The week passed and I called again: but it was to no purpose. Whenever I alluded to the book, he reminded me of the cuttle fish, and got into a fog which I could not penetrate. At last it dawned upon my mind that he might be expecting me to make an offer to repurchase the book; but this did not seem likely, as he had told me he collected books for pleasure and not for profit. So I said, Do you think of selling the book?

Evasiveness again. Why so much mystery? I said. You see I wish to see the book, and will buy it if you please. Why do you refuse to speak about it?

The interview ended by his promising to let me see the book next week.

I called again, and our palaver went on as before, but there was no book forthcoming. He had lent it to his brother, and would have it again soon.

I thought I would try another plan: not go to his shop the week after, and so seem not to care further about the book; and thus I let a fortnight pass.

One day I again called and found he had received the book back, but it was not forthcoming. He gave me his word, however, that he would show it to me on the following day.

When I called, still no book.

So I said, You and I have had a good many conversations, and from what you have said you have led me to infer that your mind has been much given to religious subjects. I cannot think that your reading has been of profit to you, for all the religious sentiments in the world will never make up for a want of respect to truth, and unless you first show me that you can keep your word as an honest man, I will not know what to think of you.

The effect of this was instantaneous. He bolted out of the shop like a shot from a gun, and left me alone. In a few minutes he came back, puffing and blowing with

the book, and gave it into my hand, saying I might keep it for a month.

It turned out to be Sandys' Travels, begun in 1610, and published in 1615. As it was in bad condition I had it repaired, and at the end of the month returned it, offering to buy it; to no purpose, however.

Not long after, the shop was closed, and I was told my friend had left the neighbourhood. One day I met him coming out of the London Hospital looking very ill. He said he was in a poor way, and had parted with most of his books. Have you parted, I said, with the one I wished to buy? I am sorry I have, he said; I thought of you and wished you to have it but I forgot where you were to be found, and I was obliged to sell off my things.

Never mind, I said, I read the book, and if I wish to refer to it again, I can always see it at the British Museum. I asked him where he lived now, but he evaded the question, and said something about his brother. We parted, and I have not fallen in with him since.

The man who sold the book is almost as curious a character as the shoe salesman. He was originally a servant, and somehow got hold of a lot of books, which determined his future way of life, for he took to attending sales. He lives in a narrow street where one would hardly expect to see a book of any kind, and there is no sign over the door. He says he buys books by the yard or hundred weight, and sells them at from twopence to any sum apiece. The Greek and Latin books he gets hold of would fill many shelves, but are mostly of little value, and such as are unsaleable find their way to the paper mills. Now and then, however, he brings me a volume worth possessing. I have asked him, who buy his books in such a locality, and his reply is that more gentlemen and dealers than one would suppose visit his store to see what he has, and his lighter books are bought by artisans.

A blind man of my congregation does a large business in sawdust. He is led by his little girl who

drives the donkey to the saw mills where he buys the article in bulk, retailing it at the wine houses and shops where it is used. His mate, also blind, earns a living by repairing cane chairs, and occasionally by singing in the streets.

Both these men have had a good education, and assist at the Penny Readings, as I will shortly relate. It is astonishing how well they know their way about London, for although the little girl leads them, this is only for protection in crossing streets. They direct the girl, not the girl them; and they once led myself and the choir to a church two miles off with the locality of which none of us were acquainted.

Besides the trades and occupations I have mentioned, we have several others in the locality of a special character.

I know a foreigner, whose business consists in importing quails from Egypt for the London market. The extent of his operations may be judged of, by the amount of a loss he incurred one inclement night by neglecting to close the window of the back room in which he kept the birds, and which his wife said came to about to £300. The quails are imported in the flat trays covered with canvas, which may be seen in the poulterers' shops of the West End, and they require to be kept warm. The same man imports also burnouses and lacquered ware of Egyptian and Algerian manufacture, which find their way to the fancy shops of Regent Street and Knightsbridge.

In another private house there is a manufactory of eider-down and other quilts, which are turned out in large quantities for the wholesale shops. The packing of the down, which is exceedingly light, is, I am told, a very nice operation. The packer is shut up in a small room or closet void of furniture and free from draughts, and there the cases are filled and sewn up preparatory to being quilted.

One of my parishioners is a manufacturer and importer of accordions, and of the instruments called banjos. His only private customers, he says, consist of the so-called

negro minstrels, who may be seen performing in the public streets. His wholesale trade, however, is considerable, as he sends parcels of goods to Australia, New Zealand, and America. His instruments, in short, are, according to his own account, known all over the world.

This reminds me of one of his customers who applied for a loan of £5 at the local Office of the Charity Organization Society, that he might set up in what is called the cheap jack business. He was a young man recently married, and he brought favourable recommendations. The ground of his application lay in the circumstance that he had found the strolling "nigger" business very uncertain and precarious, and one besides that was ever presenting temptations to drink, which he had not the moral force to resist. The young man wished to embark as a salesman of cheap cutlery and sham jewellery at Stratford. He had a ready tongue and fair address, and in consideration of his circumstances and recommendations, the loan was granted on approved security. For some time things went on fairly with him, and the loan was in course of being repaid according to the agreement. Ultimately, however, the business did not prove remunerative, and our friend was obliged to return to his old occupation, which I believe he still pursues, paying off, however, his debt with fair regularity, and endeavouring to keep free of the temptations peculiar to his calling.

We have in the district several fur dressers and manufacturers who prepare seal and other skins for the regular trade, and make them up into mantles and carriage and hearth rugs. I am told that hare, rabbit, and cat skins, are here curried, dyed and sewn together to form the commoner sorts of muffs and tippets.

It will probably surprise the reader to be informed that lithographed sermons are turned out in the locality. This I learned from the agent who contracts with the author for the supply of the contraband article, and who says that the latter has subscribers to whom he sends discourses to order, at the rate of half-a-crown a piece, the

sum he pays for the lithographing being four or five shilling per dozen copies. If this should fall into the hands of any of the clergy who may be parties in the transaction, the announcement may possibly induce them to try in future to write their own sermons; for should their congregations ever come to suspect that what they preached was composed by a bankrupt in the slums of Stepney, they would be justly scandalized.

As I am on a subject suggestive of trickery and fraud, I may mention that I know an industrious cabinet-maker in whose shop I have often been, and who manufactures old furniture out of worm-eaten oak to order. He had once a cabinet which I took for a genuine antique, and which he told me had been sold as such at a furniture sale in the West End for a considerable sum. When the old oak has not the holes bored by the natural worm, he imitates them in a way to defy detection by ordinary observers.

I have spoken about some of the day occupations of our people. Let me relate also how some of them earn their living by night.

One is an itinerant restaurateur, and has a little oil-cloth tent, which he pitches at the corner of one of the streets leading down to the Thames. Every night, about eleven o'clock, he packs up his apparatus, consisting of a stove, boiler, and lamp, together with tea and coffee, bread and butter, and cakes which his wife manufactures, and takes up his station. I believe he does a very fair business; for, independently of the labourers on great railway works, and the hands at factories, where the steam must be kept up, there is more traffic on these high roads during the night than is carried on in most country towns during the day. In such a tent you may see people sitting round the fire in the dead hours, some of whom have probably no other place to go to. This kind of lodging costs a penny, for that is the price of a cup of coffee.

The old man who blows our organ is also a bird of the night, and earns his living by calling people. He has a

capital clock, set to Post-office time; the only good one, I should say, in the district. Every morning at one o'clock, he rises at the sound of his alarum, and continues calling people till six or seven, walking over great distances, for he has a good reputation as a punctual caller. He tells me his occupation brings him into contact with the refuse of London, and that he has been often assaulted. I have seen some of this scum myself, when a fire by night in the neighbourhood has induced me to go out. It is then one sees the "night side" of London in all its ugliness.

Speaking of fires, they are quite a feature of this region, especially during the winter months, and I have only in Russia observed a similar frequency. I have heard it whispered that they are frequently the work of incendiaries to defraud the Insurance Offices; but this may be only the gossip of the common people.

Although we have no white lead factories in the district, some of my people work at this business outside; and more cadaverous-looking wretches I have seldom seen. One poor woman especially, who was expecting her confinement, excited my commiseration. She said she was driven to this occupation to support her children, her husband having left her. She was the colour of white paint, and seemed as if she was poisoned, and doubtless she was. This was a case I sent to the Charity Organization Society; and I believe I am right in saying, that by means principally of their efforts, the husband was brought back. At all events, the whole family were sent to New Zealand. The man was Irish, and was driven to desperation from inability to support his wife and children as a hanger-on at the docks.

Concerning this white lead business, I suppose it is conducted under regulations, but whatever these may be, it is a deadly occupation for those who work at it, and is said to be the final resort of the wretched.

I will now say a few words about some of our boys.

Boys in this part of London need not go far to seek work if they are able-bodied and tolerably sharp. They soon get absorbed by the tremendous jaws of London labour. Of my choir boys, one is employed in a wholesale stationer's, a second in a newspaper agency, a third is with a printer, a fourth is apprenticed to a builder, a fifth to a wholesale trunk maker, a sixth is a messenger, and a seventh is with a druggist. Of the elder lads, one is a Post Office sorter, another a railway porter, a third an Australian meat dealer, another a carpenter, a fifth a publican's man, and a sixth in a jewellery business. They earn from six shillings to fifteen a week. Mr. S—— who reads the lessons, is an optical turner.

One harum-scarum youth I took an interest in on account of the trouble he gave, and which arose from lack of a vent for his excess of animal spirits. His parents and teachers did not know what to do with him, and often whipped him, till my little friend turned truant, and was lost for some days. Great was the parents' grief; but I told them he would be sure to turn up again as soon as he got hungry enough. And turn up again he did in a few days, looking very crestfallen.

He told me the story of his running away. He was tired of school, and with another boy stole on board a ship at Wapping, hoping to be taken out some whither. The ship sailed, but hunger drove the lads out of their hiding-place before the vessel had reached Blackwall, and they were given a piece of bread and a good cuffing, and then sent ashore. After this, I endeavoured to get the lad put on board the Goliath, but for some reason he was not qualified.

He is now, however, doing well; and after trying several places, among others a wholesale confectionery warehouse, where he said he got cured of the taste for sweetmeats, has become a vanman's boy on the Great Eastern Railway, for which his robust frame well qualifies him. One day going through the City I heard my name called out, and on looking up, I saw my friend driving a pair of horses of elephantine dimensions, his red face grinning with delight because I recognised him.

He is of great use on Sundays keeping order at the church door; and the street boys fear him more than anybody else, as he shows them no mercy when he catches them. He is a depositor in the Provident Fund, and his mother says takes his earnings regularly home.

The lad I have mentioned above as being a railway porter has sometimes curious stories to tell. As he did not put in an appearance at Christmas, I inquired the cause. He said the press of work throughout the week had fairly knocked him up. Of holly, evergreens, and Christmas-trees sixteen train loads had come to his station in one day, and the hampers and parcels blocked up the sheds and platforms. I observed a tear in his coat. I am going to keep it as it is, he said. The rent had been made by the step of an engine brushing by which he had not observed in the fog, and "if the coat had not given way I would probably not have been here speaking to you." In that case, I said, the coat is worth preserving. I intend to keep it, he said, if I am allowed, but our clothes are renewed once a year, the old ones being sold to make shoddy.

The youth in the Post Office was also knocked up at Christmas. He said the block at St. Martin's was terrible. His hours are from 4 to 8 a.m. and from 4 to 8 p.m., but they are occasionally extended.

Another lad I take an interest in is an acrobat. His composition is singular, his father being a Chinese and his mother an Irishwoman. Should he have any family himself their composition will be still more peculiar, as he married a German girl last year, who lives by sing-

ing. They both perform at the Pantomimes in the winter, and during the summer exhibit in the Provinces. Dandy says he was put to his business when he was three years old, and as he has been twisting his frame ever since, it is as supple as whalebone. He once told me he was dead. I asked him what he meant. Well, this way, he replied. I was going through the performance on the trapeze one morning on the stage when there was no one else in the theatre, and missing the bar fell. My foot, however, was caught in a noose, and I hung head downwards. I tried to work myself up again, but could get no hold, and lost my senses. When I became conscious I found I was in Guy's Hospital. How were you freed from the noose? I asked. Well, he said, as I was hanging, some of the stage people came in and cut the rope, and I fell to the ground. They thought I was dead, as I was bleeding at the mouth, and I thought so too.

I find this lad very useful when any small repair is needed on the roof or bell turret, for he asks for no long ladders, which are costly to hire, and require three or four men to set up. A short ladder and a long rope are sufficient for his purpose. His services are also called into requisition on occasions of parochial excursions, when his wife accompanies his antics and her own singing on an accordion. His harlequin dress which he wears on such occasions is bespangled with silver. He says it weighs nineteen pounds, and cost six pounds. In the same house lives another youth, also a "tumbler," as he calls himself. They concur in saying that their life is a very hard and precarious one. In another lodging close by reside some "sprites," as they are called, —young women who figure in the transformation scenes of the theatres.

We have two sea captains who attend the Church. The former has retired from active service, and is a candidate for a Trinity House Pension. He sometimes entertains the people at the Penny Readings by relating some wonderful tale of the sea. The other captain had

his sons put into the choir, and seldom misses a service when in the Port of London. Besides these, a mate of middle age puts in an appearance from time to time. He does a little business on his own account in tropical animals and birds, which he disposes of at the markets.

I have been frequently asked whether I find any marked spirit of scepticism or infidelity among the class that I have to do with.

I do not. I have, indeed, only known one man whose opinions on religious subjects were of this kind. He was a smith, and forged iron work for ships. I made his acquaintance by getting him to do some work at the church. His circumstances were far above the average, as he owned several houses. He has now retired from business and left the district.

I have had many conversations with this man upon religious topics, but without any result so far as I know. His difficulty, he said, lay in his incapacity to comprehend the miracles of the Bible, which he ridiculed; the efficacy of prayer, which he thought vain and useless; and the evidences of Christianity, which he said were no evidences at all. The course of nature, he argued, was unchangeable; and so far as I could make out, he cast in doubt even the existence of a Supreme Being.

I asked him whether he did not consider that the Being who gave the world existence and laws—for he admitted law—was able to interfere with the course of nature on suitable occasions? Certainly, he replied; but you have first to prove that there is such a Being, and next, that interferences have really occurred.

Well, I said, the very existence of the world surely proves the first, for the world could not have made itself; and the second rests upon testimony which I for one hold to be credible and sufficient. Neither you, sir, nor I, nor any other person, can know anything about these matters, he replied. I beg your pardon, I said, you may speak for yourself, but you have no right to speak for other people. Do you say the world made itself, for if not, it

must have been created, and if so, there is a Creator? I know nothing about it, he said. I will not take that answer; it is an absurd and ridiculous one. I say I know nothing about it, he repeated. I say you do, and every child does. Now then, I said, you cast ridicule upon prayer, and religion in general. Have you no conception then, of a spiritual world outside of or beyond the world of the senses? Have you no ideas, for example, about the soul and a future state?

Of these, again he replied, I know nothing; but suppose them to be figments of the priesthood? Surely not, I said, for ideas of the soul and of a future state are as old as mankind. I see your doubts about religion, I added, arise from want of instruction. You say, people can't know matters of this kind. I say, they can and do, and if they are willing to learn they may attain, God helping, to knowledge sufficient for all purposes of practical duty in this life, and to the hope of eternal blessedness in the life to come. I am too old to learn at my time of life, he said. Not at all, I said. I will tell you what I will do for you. I will undertake either by myself, or by the help of others, to have your doubts about religion removed, if you will honestly and fully state them, and yield when you are convinced. He would never, however, come to such close quarters; and our long talks always ended as we began them.

One day, at the close of last year, I met him in Aldgate, and we stopped and had a chat in the old manner, but he was still in the same mind. His tone, however, had lost its quality of ridicule, and perhaps he sometimes thinks of what I said to him, for he told me I was the first minister who had ever spoken with him.

Instances of this kind are, however, very rare among the people with whom I have to do, who are generally too much engrossed with the struggle for subsistence, or too thoughtless to form opinions upon such subjects for themselves. Their reflections on religion, like those of most other people, when they make any, run in the groove carved for them by their teachers, whoever these may be.

Who are these teachers? Well, I take myself, of course, to be one of them, and the teaching they receive from me, I receive from my Church. But of course I am able to reach but few among so great a number. Many take their notions, I think, from preachers who make religion to consist in certain states of feeling rather than in the discharge of duty, and the keeping of God's commandments; and of such, one can only say that if the state of feeling they urge and endeavour to impart induces people to lead a better life, when they attain it, one cannot but be thankful for the result. But I have not found by experience that this result is attained in this way. I cannot affirm it of my own knowledge, but I am told by trustworthy persons, that the people who attend theatres and music halls on Sundays where the character of the preaching is sensational and highly seasoned with appeals to the feelings, are the same who go to the play or frequent the dancing on week days, and attend the services by way of pastime.

Certain preachers are greatly advertised in the neighbourhood, some on very curious grounds. One was formerly a prize-fighter; another is a converted gipsy (I met him one day in Epping Forest on the occasion of an excursion); of a third, I have heard it said that he was advertised as being so much over or under, I forget which, four feet high; a fourth is a fiddler; a fifth an engine driver; and a sixth had been in prison.

In time, however, this sensationalism palls upon the palate, and it will probably work its own cure; for the people here are not devoid of common sense, and I have heard them object to the familiar way in which these preachers speak of things which deserve to be treated with reverence.

The reason why this kind of excitement has become so rampant is not far to seek. The work of the Church of England in the East of London is of comparatively recent date, and the population have been left for generations to their own devices. Meanwhile there can be little doubt that the preachers here alluded to supply some-

thing for which there is a demand, and endeavour to fill a void; for both they and their hearers seem to be, in a rough way, groping after some truer and higher thing than their daily life furnishes.

If we go back fifty years, it will be found that in the part of East London comprising the parishes of Stepney, Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Limehouse, Spitalfields, Whitechapel, Poplar, Wapping, Shadwell and St. George's-in-the-East, and containing a population of upwards of 200,000, there were only ten churches. Twenty years later, the population had increased to nearly 290,000, but only two new churches had meanwhile been built, the whole church accommodation in these twelve churches, every seat reckoned, being 16,000.

This was a generation ago; and it is not to be wondered at if the East of London became, in a great measure, lost to the National Church. Nor do any serious attempts to plant the Church of England among the masses who were beyond the reach of the old establishments seem to have been made until the time of Bishop Blomfield, who built the churches in Bethnal Green, which are associated with his name.* During these years, however, of supineness on the part of the Church of England, the Nonconformist bodies were not indifferent to the needs of the population.†

* There are at present in the parishes above-named 65 churches and 8 missions, the population being 645,964.

† For the following pedigree of the Churches of East London I am indebted to Mr. Price, of the *East London Observer* Office, who is bringing out a book upon the subject. Parent-church, St. Dunstan's, then Whitechapel and Bow, both in the 14th century; then St. Matthias, Poplar, and Shadwell Church, both about 1650; then St. John's, Wapping, 1694; then Christ Church, Spitalfields, St. Anne's, Limehouse, and St. George's, Middlesex, in Queen Anne's time; then Bethnal Green parish church, 1743. St. Philip's, Stepney, and St. John's, Bethnal Green, were built in 1819 and 1820, as chapels of ease to their respective parish churches. These were followed in 1839 by Bishop Blomfield's churches, and later by the churches of this generation. Of Nonconformist places of worship the earliest was Stepney Meeting 1641; then Bethnal Green, 1670; then Gravel Lane, 1680; and later Sion Chapel, 1790.

I WILL now say a few words about our own services. These are poorly attended in the morning, but very fairly in the evening, while on festival occasions the Church is filled, and strangers who have happened to be present have expressed surprise at seeing such gatherings in so poor a church. A hearty and edifying service is what is aimed at. As the people are partial to music, we endeavour to supply it as well as our means will allow, and any deficiency in the choir is made good by the congregation themselves.

I have been frequently asked whether I find what is called a High Church or a Low Church service most suitable; but I am unable to make a distinct reply. The services at St. Augustine's were conducted chorally at their commencement; and, so far as I know, they have never been materially altered. Whether a plain read service would attract people better, I have not tried to discover; for so long as matters issue in a fair degree of edification and reverence, I am not disposed to make any experiments. From indications which I have observed, I judge that the poor, to a greater degree even than other classes, like a hearty service, and I am sure they would not attend a dull one; a service, I mean, performed as if it were a task of official routine. As for a greater or a smaller number of ceremonies, my impression is that they are indifferent on the subject.

I may add that no attempt is made to bribe the people to come to church, unless efforts to make the service hearty and attractive be counted as such. It would not be difficult here to fill the seats by holding out rewards in various shapes, but any such system would only issue in pretence and hypocrisy.

As regards what is called Church feeling in the district, I am at a loss to say whether it exists to any great extent or not, for I believe that the sentiments the people entertain towards the Mission are independent of the denomination to which it belongs. They have a personal regard for those who are connected with it, and we have not thought that much good would be likely to result from pressing "Churchism," as if it was the only thing to benefit them.

It has been frequently alleged that the Church of England services are unsuitable to the poor, and certain it is that in numbers of parishes the labouring classes are conspicuous by their absence from the church. The cause of this, however, is not, I believe, connected with the character of the service, or with the preaching of any particular clergyman, but is to be looked for in social considerations. The Church of England has hardly any enemy so destructive of its influence as the system of pews and appropriated sittings, and until this system is abolished, it will repel, rather than attract the poor, who are either too modest or too proud to intrude into places which people better off than themselves have fitted up for their own use. As for getting the working classes to occupy the seats usually labelled free, the idea may be dismissed as nonsensical.

The people, however, distinguish in their own way between the Church of England and other religious denominations. They think of the former as possessed of wealth and power, and of its ministers as respectable, by reason of their education and the regard they generally show to the poor. What they think of the latter, I cannot say, except that against the Roman Catholics they entertain an inherited prejudice.

To return, however, to our services at St. Augustine's.

As regards sermons, the plainer and more practical they are the better, for this is no place for conventional phrases, to which it is often not intended that a strict meaning is to be attached. I have been often not a little entertained when I have seen the expression on the

faces of stranger preachers, of whom we have had from time to time about fifty among us. They have generally brought a written sermon in a neat velvet case, but as they see no pulpit, they look puzzled, more especially when they behold the congregation. I know what they are thinking—"This sermon will never do, and as for the velvet case, it is quite out of place, for there is no cushion to lay it on." Back goes the sermon into the pocket, and a Bible is taken up, and an extempore address is evidently in preparation.

The result justifies my suspicions, and an excellent sermon concludes the service. It is only, however, fair to the congregation to say that their marked attention puts the preacher upon his mettle, and often makes him eloquent in the best sense of the word.

I have been frequently asked whether the inhabitants of my district are in any marked degree of the criminal class, and I have replied, certainly not.

I hear, indeed, occasionally of shocking fights, in which the knife is freely used. From time to time, also, I meet men evidently returning from the wars, and women with dishevelled hair and blackened eyes. This only takes place, however, at holiday times, when some of the people break out in a manner unusual to their ordinary way of living.

A proof that the population is more civilized than it used to be, arises out of the circumstance that we are now able to hold our services and various meetings in peace, and that the Mission women and lady visitors never complain of rudeness. Some years ago a lady could hardly pass through the streets unmolested, and brickbats used to be thrown into the church. When I first joined the district, "rows" at the entrance were so frequent that the services of a policeman were often called into requisition, and all our meetings were liable to be disturbed by outsiders. Since then, however, the black looks I used to observe in many quarters have given way to a pleased expression of face, and the windows are very rarely broken. In stating this, however, it is fair to add that

to save glaziers' bills the lower panes in the church were boarded up two years ago, and that there still exists a mischief-working gang, ready for any adventure.

I am told, also, that certain houses are let out to disreputable women, and I have fallen in with such when an early morning service has taken me through some of the slums. On such occasions they have appeared in a state of helpless intoxication, lying in the doorways of houses, covered with mud, the very pictures of shame and degradation.

One's pen recoils from describing scenes of this kind. But let the truth be told. I suppose every locality has its own share of vice, and this locality is not worse than others. But when vice shows its face here it shows a very ugly one. If the face of vice were everywhere as shocking, it would furnish its own best antidote.

Of public houses the district possesses twelve; though outside there are many more, and on a much grander scale. The public houses, indeed, in the East of London appear to be both more numerous and more attractive than they are in other quarters.

It is interesting to know that the people in the district indulge in a little wine. I say a little, for the consumers, I am told, are mostly old people or invalids. The manager of a wine business in the vicinity told me that the day before Christmas he sold upwards of £60 worth of port and sherry in small quantities, his average daily receipts amounting to £5 from the sale chiefly of penny and twopenny glasses.

As regards food, the supply of all eatables is enormous. Fish is cheap, whether at the stalls or cooked; and upon fish mainly many seem to subsist, meat being reserved for the Sunday dinner. Fruit is also most abundant, and excellent.

One would hardly expect to find the labouring population indulging themselves in turkeys and oysters. Conversing, however, one day with a shopkeeper who sells fish, fruit, and poultry, I asked him who purchased his turkeys and fowls, and he replied, mechanics. Pre-

sently a very ragged woman came in and gobbled up half a dozen oysters, for which she paid ninepence.

I have often had occasion to observe the lavishness with which money is spent by some of the labouring classes. One fine summer's day I accompanied a party on an excursion to Hunstanton in Norfolk. There we found that ample provision had been made for a thousand persons. Unfortunately the day turned out wet, and the excursionists were driven under what cover was obtainable. Many spent the afternoon in the taproom of the inn; and when evening came were not fit to walk to the train.

Our parochial excursions are not, however, abused in this way, although on these occasions, also, the people are frequently lavish in their expenditure. Against this, however, it is to be set that their holidays in the country are few and far between, and when they do come round they are made the very most of.

I have mentioned several ladies who help me in my work, and I should like to add the names of Miss C. E. Arkwright, the Countess Brownlow, Miss Laura Oldfield,* and the Hon. Miss Scott. The former has kindly visited a number of sick cases. Miss Scott, acting as deputy for Lady Selborne, has done much in helping at the Mothers' Meetings; while to Lady Brownlow the poor have been indebted for entertainments over which she has presided at the Mission House.

* Since this was in the press, Miss Oldfield has been removed by death. She was a person of conspicuous ability and piety, and her loss to the Parochial Mission Women Fund will not be easily supplied. It is understood that she was the "Lady Manager," who wrote Mrs. Elliott's Memoirs mentioned at pape 18 of this narrative.

Although this narrative is intended mainly as a record of my own experience in the work of my Mission district, it will not, I believe, be out of place to institute a comparison between the East of London and the West, as some statistics which I have before me fully account for the remarkable differences existing between these two regions of the metropolis.

The part of East London I have selected for the comparison, and which may be regarded as an intensified and gigantic "poorer part" in a Western District, consists of the parishes of Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, St. George's-in-the-East, Stepney, Mile End Old Town, and Poplar. With this I will compare a nearly equal area of West London, comprising Kensington, Paddington, Chelsea, St. George's, Hanover Square, and the so-called Westminster Union, including St. James', Piccadilly, and St. Anne's, Soho. The acreage of the former of these areas is 6347, and of the latter 6230 acres; the population of the first being 495,119, and of the second, 648,928.

From these statistics, it appears that the population of the Eastern area exceeds that of the Western by 153,809, and that the householders in the East are more numerous than those in the West, by 16,965, and the houses by 24,935. To estimate what this means, we may conceive all the houses and all the people of a town like Bristol or Halifax, or all the houses and all the people of a county like Buckingham or Bedford, transplanted to the West of London, filling the Parks and Squares, in order to form an idea of what would be required to make

the West balance the East of London in respect of houses and population.

Again, in the Western area, the rateable value is upwards of £5,000,000, in the Eastern not half of that sum. In the West upwards of £500,000 are raised in rates and expended upon the poor; in the East, the poor rates reach about £380,000, and the expenditure £420,000.

The amount of the poor rate in the West is about 1*s.* 3*d.*, against 3*s.* in the East. In the West there are three paupers to every hundred of the population; in the East five to every hundred; and to about 2000 beggars apprehended in 1873 in the West, there were only 200 in the East. Again, while in the West there are about thirteen houses and 106 persons to an acre of ground, in the East there are eighteen houses and 144 persons. In the West seven persons on an average dwell in each house, while eight dwell in each house in the East.

The rateable value per acre in the West is £1000, and in the East less than one-half. The rateable value of each house in the West, is about £70; in the East about £24.

There are besides ninety Public Institutions in the West inhabited by 15,000 inmates, against sixty in the East, with about 10,000 inmates; and 500 Agencies for Relief connected with Churches, Chapels, and Charitable Associations in the West, against 300 in the East. The Charity Organization Society dealt with upwards of 4000 cases in the West in 1874, at an expenditure of about £5,300; and with about 1500 in the East, at an expenditure of £1200.*

There were, at the taking of the last census in 1871, nearly 30,000 professional residents in the West; the same class in the East not reaching a third of that number. To nearly 9000 persons of rank and property in the West, there are but 1900 in the East. To nearly 70,000 domestic servants in the West, there were under

* Since then two new committees have been formed, namely, St. George's in the East, and Mile End Old Town.

20,000 in the East, most of them, probably, girls under age; and to 115,000 engaged in commercial business resident in the West, there were but 38,000 of the same class in the East. On the other hand, the East had 160,000 artisans and labourers, as against 110,000 in the West; about 7000 inmates of workhouses as against 4000; and 600 inmates of hospitals, as against 1700 in the West.

The Registrar of Friendly Societies, in his last Report, gives a list of 104 Lodges or Societies in the five Western Parishes, owning funds to the amount of £150,000, and numbering 45,000 members; while in the seven Eastern Parishes there were 152 Societies, owning funds to the amount of £73,000, and numbering about 1300 members. Besides these were 31 Societies in the West possessing another sum of £150,000; and 48 Societies in the East possessing £23,000, of which the number of members was not returned. This will make a total of 135 Lodges and Societies in the West, with funds amounting to £300,000, as against 200 in the East, with funds amounting to about £100,000. On a rough calculation Liverpool, which has a population of 500,000, possesses 250 Friendly Societies, numbering about 120,000 members, and owning upwards of £200,000.

As regards Church of England statistics, it appears that, while in the Western Parishes there are 95 Churches with 214 clergy, there are in the East only 65 Churches and 128 clergy. This gives one church for every 5200 of the population in the West, as against one for every 10,000 in the East, and one clergyman for 2300 in the West, as against one for upwards of 5000 in the East. As regards places of Worship not in connection with the Church of England, curiously enough, there are 75 in each, with the same number of ministers. I omit educational statistics, as I believe the School Board operations have probably by this time resulted in supplying equally both the regions under our consideration.

The statistics comparing the married and the unmar-

ried, widowers and widows, and Births, Marriages, and Deaths in the two Districts, are curious. Here are the Tables.

In the Western District there were on the night of the Census in 1871 :—

Married Couples.	Unmarried.	Widowers.
90,000	Males 70,000	Males 8,000
	Females 110,000	Females 28,500

In the Eastern District.

110,000	Males 70,000	Males 10,000
	Females 60,000	Females 28,000

In the West.

Registered in 10 years, 1860-70.

Births.	Marriages.	Deaths.	Excess.
155,100	52,200	115,000	40,100

In the East.

239,300	68,200	162,000	77,300

These statistics, besides being interesting in themselves, account for much of the difference existing in the condition of society in the two areas.*

Of course, in so large a region as that of East London some parts are much more favoured than others in respect of the character of the population, their dwellings, the width of the streets, and the more facile access to open spaces of recreation ; but some peculiarities are common to the whole district.

Not only are there no gentry, but the chief employers of labour have ceased to reside ; and the professional class being too insignificant in number to balance the lower class, a social picture is presented, unique, so far as I know, on so large a scale in this aristocratic country.

* Owing to the form in which the Police Statistics are made up, it is very difficult to obtain any comparison as to the amount of crime in the two Districts.

The landlords of the public-houses are here in the position of leaders, and not without reason; for they are often rich and influential, and are connected besides by many ties with the labouring classes. The public-houses are identified with the working men's Christmas and other Clubs, Lodges, Unions, and Provident Societies, and above all with their Leads, or Funeral Benefits.*

The population, in short, is a congeries, without backbone or organic connection, of labourers in all the trades nearly under the sun; a concentration of human beings engaged in the ceaseless toil which fills our shops with almost every variety of commodity, and constructs our railways, ships, and telegraphs.

There are, of course, other residents, in some places in considerable numbers, of the middle classes. Besides the parochial clergy, ministers, doctors, and lawyers, are city clerks, shop and store-keepers, officials connected with the parishes, docks, and customs, overseers of breweries, distilleries, and engine works, and managers of all degrees and orders in the ship-building, sugar-baking, match-making, and a hundred other important industries.

But all these taken together form but a small fraction of the total population; which, looked upon as a whole, presents a nearly uniform level of human life, in not the most attractive form; one part of East London only differing from another in the specific character of the labour of its inhabitants.

* A Lead is a benefit party. When a husband or wife or child dies, or any misfortune befalls, the family invite the friends to meet at a public house. Each ticket costs 6d. or 1s., and the profits go to pay the funeral expenses, which are frequently very considerable, or to make up the loss incurred by the misfortune.

It may be mentioned here that the substance of this chapter formed a paper which was read at the Council of the Charity Organization Society about two years ago.

I HAVE allowed my pen to run on much farther than I at first intended. I have still, however, a little to say, and will, therefore, go back to pick up the thread of my story about the progress of the Mission.

I have given some account of the institutions established by my predecessor, and will add a few more words as to what I have attempted myself.

A year after I had been at the Mission I started a reading room in the Mission House. The plan was to afford some counter attraction to the beershops. The subscription was to be a penny a week, and a cup of coffee was to be supplied for the same sum. Three months' trial, however, was sufficient to show that the idea had not been appreciated, and the books and magazines were transferred to the Sunday School Library, to be lent out for reading at home. This plan answered better; and to judge by the demand, a taste for reading is cherished in the district. In this process, however, a good many books are not returned, and the library is becoming smaller every year.

About the same time I entered into a negotiation with the London School Board, with the view of hiring one of the rooms in their new building for a Sunday School. Their terms, however, were beyond my reach, the rent they asked being £28 10*s*., exclusive of firing, light, and expenses for cleaning. The room was afterwards taken for the same purpose by a City clergyman, who has given his services on Sunday afternoons to St. Augustine's, until such time as the district may be efficiently set up. Meanwhile the old Sunday School is continued in the church as heretofore, with a reduced number of scholars.

At this time also a site was offered for a permanent church; and I wrote to Mr. Wright, the secretary of the Bishop of London's Fund, who at once sent down two gentlemen to survey it. The Bishop expressed an earnest desire that the design might be carried out, and the following clergymen gave me permission to use their names in the prospectus which it was proposed to issue:— Bishop Piers Claughton, Lord Alwyne Compton, Canon Liddon, the Rev. A. Blomfield, the Rev. B. Belcher, the Rev. S. E. Gladstone, and the Rev. J. S. Hilliard. The Rector of St. Dunstan's also expressed his willingness to help. The negotiations, however, fell through, and the site was bought by a tradesman.

The Penny Reading movement has been a great success, and very fertile, I think, of wholesome results. At the outset I engaged accomplished readers, reciters, and musicians; but the difficulty of securing a regular supply of these soon made itself felt. I, therefore, one evening told the audience that they would have to depend for the future more upon themselves for their own entertainment, adding that I was open to any reasonable offers. The result was, than an amount of local talent was developed of which I had no idea; and the people themselves now supply the elements necessary for a couple of hours' entertainment; one young woman being an exceptionally good reciter, another an excellent singer, and a third a pianiste. As for readers, more offer their services than we can often employ. I have observed that fables interest the people more almost than any other kind of reading, and that a recitation well done is rewarded with much applause.

We have occasionally, a missionary meeting which is well attended, especially when some one joins who can speak from his own experience; and in order to cultivate an interest in efforts of Christian benevolence sermons are annually preached and collections made for various religious and charitable purposes outside the district.

Last year I established a depôt for the sale of Bibles

and Prayer Books, and issued at the same time an Almanac with local information. Bibles and Prayer books used to be often asked for, and there was no shop in the immediate neighbourhood where they could be purchased; the only accessible literature, indeed, consisting of the penny and halfpenny newspapers.

It was intended, this winter, to form a coal club, but illness has unfortunately prevented the lady whose idea it was from putting the plan into execution; as also a crêche, which would be of great use, and which I would be glad if some one would start.

As regards the administration of relief to the poor and the sick; this is mostly left in the hands of the visitors and the Mission nurse, who has always on her list several chronic and other cases, and whose ministrations are much appreciated by the poor. Were it not, indeed, for such attention, great misery would often be endured. The medical attendants have frequently failed to recognise their patients on repeating their visits after the nurse has been called in to make them comfortable. I ought to have mentioned regarding the nurse, that she has been transferred from the staff of the East London Nursing Society to that of the National and Metropolitan Nursing Association, which I trust will prove as valuable a helper.

In cases where it is found that a larger sum than the Mission funds can afford would be the most suitable form of assistance in any particular case, resort is had to the Local Committee of the Charity Organization Society, an agency which promises to be of the highest value, and for whose operations East London affords an almost boundless field. Hospital letters are supplied by the Lord Mayor; and for cases of convalescents we gladly avail ourselves of Mrs. Gladstone's Home at Woodford, for which we have never lacked cards of admission.

As this Paper would be incomplete without an indication of what it is proposed still, God willing, to accomplish in the district, there remain a few paragraphs to be added.

It is proposed, then, as soon as practicable, to proceed with the building of a permanent Church, and a permanent Mission House, the latter occupying the site of the present makeshift place of worship, which will hardly bear further patching, any more than the present Mission House,which has besides become too confined for the increasing work of the district.

The question has been often put to me, Can you not endeavour to obtain for your district one of the disused City churches ? This is exactly what I believe ought to be the solution of the difficulty in providing the new church. There is an objection, however, to this course which I feel strongly, and it is this. Supposing an old city church were brought hither, its patronage would naturally come with it, and the mission clergyman would probably be put upon the shelf ; for in the Church of England the rights of patrons, that is, of property, seem often to be of more account than the rights of human beings. I should not be surprised, therefore, if it were found a lesser difficulty to build the church by means of subscriptions. Some agitation is at present going on regarding the City churches, but it may take years before it culminates in any practical result, and there are other matters involved, Sion College, for example, which require revision and amendment likely to be strongly resisted. It seems unreasonable that the whole body of the London clergy should not share its advantages, whatever they are ; for not being a member, I am ignorant of its nature. I have been indeed asked on two or three occasions to attend meetings at the College, and have heard there is a good library there, the benefits of which I might enjoy on subscribing as an outsider ; which, however, I have declined doing, it not being obvious why I should be asked to pay a tax which I believe the authorities have no right whatsoever to levy.

To return, however, to St. Augustine's. That a church is needed in the district, what I have already said has I think, demonstrated; and this being so, the rest becomes a question of ways and means ; though not

quite an easy and obvious one, as it is not at present apparent whence these are to be derived.

The lowest cost at which a church, a mission house, and a parsonage might be provided, could not probably be stated at less than ten or twelve thousand pounds. But be this as it may, it seems to be the duty of the Church of England to see that the thing is done; and if that Church had been properly organized, and had discharged its obligations as the national religious teacher which it claims to be, it would have been done long ago. It will be my duty at all events to press the matter as long as I have a concern in it, and when I leave the district to commend it to my successor.

Other improvements are contemplated in the district, which will not come a day too soon. Dr. Corner, the medical officer of health, reports many of the houses as in a wretched state; although it is a moot point whether they come under Section 3 of the Home Secretary's Artisans' Dwelling Act.

The houses were built decades of years ago out of old materials, which are now mostly worn out, and many of them can never have been suitable for human habitations, some of the streets being not more than nine feet wide, and the rooms of the houses than nine feet square. The cellars, called by courtesy kitchens, are mostly so damp as to give the people who live in them rheumatism and bronchitis. It is high time that these dwellings should be superseded by new ones laid out on a new plan, with intervening spaces for the children, who are compelled at present to make the streets their playground.

The locality, from its proximity to the City, the docks, and other centres of labour, will probably always attract the poorer classes, as it has done heretofore; for I have observed that no sooner is a house, however wretched, vacated, than it is retaken, and lodgings are very rarely to be obtained,—their rents varying from two to five shillings a week.

But it is time to conclude.

I am aware that the work I have been describing is similar in its details to what is pursued in many districts besides this, both in London and in other large towns ; and I do not claim for my district that it has made any particular progress beyond others in like circumstances. I am, indeed, too well aware how much has been left undone that might have been done, and how much remains still to be accomplished that only the co-operation of a number of agencies can effect. A narrative, however, such as I have here set down, is not always easily attainable ; and I hope it may be read with some degree of interest, as showing how good may be wrought by the application of well-considered methods, pursued long enough with energy and patience, even in localities which may at first sight seem too low and degraded for much expectation to be entertained of their improvement.

In districts like this, social reforms must go hand in hand with religion, if any permanent benefit is to result ; and the clergyman is called to be a teacher of the rudiments almost of civilisation before he can properly exercise the functions of his office as a preacher of the Gospel. The reception of the latter implies that the policeman, that is law, has brought about a certain order in society, and this order must be in existence before the Gospel can come with its divine message to mankind. This was the history of the spread of Christianity in the early ages, and it is its history now, among uncivilized nations.

To bring about social reform, however, among our long-neglected population of labouring poor, machinery is required to facilitate its growth and development. This machinery consists in improved ways of living, which induce self-respect, sobriety, and attention to the common laws of health and temporal well-being ; and comprises better dwellings, schools, and any other agencies, whereby the good of the population may be promoted.

This narrative will prove, at least, that even the most unattractive fields of a clergyman's labour may yield a

harvest rich in interest, and let us hope in results; and that even, with what may be considered very inadequate machinery, a good deal may be done to promote religion and education, in a word, Christian civilization, among the lower classes of our people.

Much of course is required to be undertaken by the clergyman, which does not strictly come within his sphere as commonly understood. But it is difficult to see how he can discharge his proper functions in such localities unless he endeavours, by all the means at his disposal, to promote at the same time the temporal and social well-being of his parishioners. The problem before him is an exceedingly difficult and complex one, and only experience can show how it may best be solved. One thing seems clear, that there is room for every variety of religious and benevolent effort among such populations as the East of London contains; and I will only add that it is exceedingly desirable that clergymen in such a district should be freed from some of the burdens which they have, under present circumstances, to bear, so that they may discharge better their spiritual office.

London: Swift & Co., Newton Street, High Holborn, W.C.